

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NAPLES 01605 161725Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAPLES 1605

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN

SUBJECT: CONSULAR AFFAIRS

CA FOR WATSON ONLY

1. THIS IS TO LET YOU KNOW THAT NO MATTER HOW HARD WE TRY THE VALIDITY OF YOUR FULL STAFFING CONCEPT FOR CONSULAR OPERATIONS REMAINS AN ENIGMA EVEN TO SOME OF THE BEST MINDS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE. A CASE IN POINT IS A SUPPLEMENTAL STATEMENT BY THE EMBASSY ROME TO MY COMMENTS RE THE INSPECTORS' RECOMMENDATION THAT ANOTHER AMERICAN CONSULAR POSITION IN NAPLES BE ABOLISHED. TO MY REPLY WHICH IS QUOTED VERBATIM IN TODAY'S EMBASSY "STADIS" 14975 TO THE DEPARTMENT THE EMBASSY ADDS A COMMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT IT WOULD NOT INTERPOSE OBJECTIONS TO THE ELIMINATION OF THE JOB IF THE DEPARTMENT COULD INSURE FULL STAFFING FOR THE POST. MY REPLY WHICH IS QUOTED BELOW (PLEASE SEE ALSO NAPLES 1428 TO DEPARTMENT) IS THAT A COMPLE-

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MENT OF FIVE POSITIONS IS NEEDED FOR CONSULAR SECTIONS WHERE FOUR OFFICERS ARE REQUIRED ON BOARD AT ANY GIVEN TIME. THIS IS PARTICULARLY THE CASE WHEN WORKLOAD IS RISING AND LOCAL STAFF BEING REDUCED.

2. HERE IS MY REPLY TO THE INSPECTORS' RECOMMENDATION TO WHICH THE EMBASSY ADDED ITS COMMENT:

QUOTE THE INSPECTORS REASON THAT FOUR OFFICERS ON DUTY ARE SUFFICIENT TO MAINTAIN HIGH QUALITY AND RESPONSIVE CONSULAR SERVICES AT PRESENT LEVELS OF DEMAND. I AGREE WITH THIS VIEW BUT AS underscored IN

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REF C OF JULY 24, (NAPLES 1428) A COMPLEMENT OF FIVE POSITIONS IS REQUIRED TO INSURE THAT FOUR OFFICERS ARE ACTUALLY ON BOARD. THE RECORD OVER THE PAST YEAR CLEARLY BEARS THIS OUT. IN FACT DUE TO VACANCY GAPS, EMERGENCY LEAVE, HOME LEAVE, AND FSI LANGUAGE TRAINING, AT TIMES WE HAVE HAD TO OPERATE WITH ONLY THREE OFFICERS.

THE INSPECTORS POINT TO OUR PLAN TO ROTATE THE INCUMBENT OF THIS POSITION IN SUBSTANTIVE WORK THIS FALL. THIS IS TRUE, BUT THE DETAIL

AT MOST WILL BE OF SHORT DURATION BECAUSE ANOTHER CONSULAR OFFICER
WILL BE AWAY ON HOME LEAVE AND TRAINING FROM NOVEMBER 15 TO MARCH 15.
DURING THE PAST 40 MONTHS WE HAVE REDUCED THE AMERICAN CONSULAR
COMPLEMENT FROM NINE TO FIVE POSITIONS. TO REDUCE ANY FURTHER WOULD

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IGNORE THE REALITIES OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE (VACANCY GAPS, HOME
LEAVE, ANNUAL AND SICK LEAVE, FSI LANGUAGE TRAINING ETC) AND RESULT
IN IMPAIRED EFFICIENCY AND MORALE.

THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH REFER TO NAPLES 1428 FOR ADDITIONAL
INFO. UNQUOTE

3. LOVE AND KISSES. COLANTONIO

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